Changing Minds, Changing Lives: Fostering Resilience Among Elite College Athletes

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RESILIENCE

Ability to accept change as a challenge

Ability to bounce back from adversity with feelings of agency, efficacy, and engagement

(Phelps et al., 2009) 2012 Trauma Informed Care Stakeholders Group Training Subcommittee
Resilience

- responding to adversity
- physical and psychological capacities
- to navigate and negotiate
- utilizing social and cultural supports

(Ungar, Ghazinour, & Richter, 2013)
Effectively coping with stressful life events strengthens the action of brain systems involved in emotion regulation and behavioral control.

Maier & Watkins, 2010
“When we are able to put most of our energy into developing our natural talent there is extraordinary room for growth. So you cannot be anything you want to be, but you can be a lot more of who you already are.”

(Rath, 2007)
Opportunity Structures

- Features of the environment that facilitate the expression, embodiment and realization of latent individual capacities
- Promote growth, development & thriving

(Ungar, et al, 2013)
Changing Minds, Changing Lives
(Chandler, 2009; Chandler, Roberts & Chiodo 2015)

• Resilience is teachable
• Builds on strengths
• Appreciative Inquiry
  (Watkins, Mohr, & Kelly, 2011)
• Experiential learning
• Skills-based
• Transformational
R = r / c
Some things are within our control... and some things are not.
Resources

• Internal

• External
"It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent that survives. It is the one that is most adaptable to change."

Charles Darwin
We have to practice taking in positive experiences...

Our brains have a Negativity Bias
Health Defeating
- Mistrust
- Fear
- Isolation
- Protectiveness

Health Promoting
- Trust
- Security
- Connecting
- Openness

RESILIENCE
Self Determination Theory

- **Basic Human Needs**
  - **Competence**: Effective dealing with environment
  - **Relatedness**: Close relationships with peers
  - **Autonomy**: Control the course of our lives
Building Blocks of Resilience: The ABCS

- Active coping
- Building on strengths
- Cognitive awareness
- Social support
Active Coping
Building Strength
Cognitive Awareness

THINK DO BE
POSITIVE
Social Support
• Relaxation
• Research
• Writing
• Response
• Reflection
My resilience story happens everyday. I am constantly bouncing back.

I don’t sleep at night, bounce back, have a 6 am lift, bounce back,

just got assigned so much homework I don’t even want to do it, bounce back.

wasn’t a good son today bounce back, wasn’t a good boyfriend, bounce back

doubt myself bounce back worry too much bounce back,

then the cycle repeats...
Where I am from...
I opened up more than usual as I found a mind clearing tool. My experience in this class has helped me cope with stress I go through daily. The stuff that we have learned in this class has helped me deal with stress in class a lot of days. I feel like I can go and lean on people... I can count on my team for anything now.

Learned about life
Learned about sleep
Learned about writing, resiliency, and mindfulness is a thing of beauty.

I am proud to be a Minuteman.
CMCL Outcomes

• Skill acquisition
• Personal transformation
• Help-seeking & giving
• Role engagement
• Pro-social development
• Stereotype-busting
• Cultural resonance
• Team cohesion
Quantitative Results

Individuals in the intervention group with ACE increased their emotional awareness scores by at least 25% compared to controls; 30% increase was seen in PCS scale scores. Although not significant, this amount of change is meaningful and warrants further investigation.
Qualitative Data: Major Themes

- Opening up & recognizing emotions
- Counting on others & reaching out
- Starting with strengths builds a team
Emotional Awareness

• Recognize, use and make good decisions
• Sustained at follow-up despite higher distress
• Reduced conduct violations
CMCL is an opportunity structure

1. Pause, Reflect, feel in control: Manage stress

2. Know self & connect with others: Emotional intelligence

3. Share personal opinions, hear others point of view: Increase respect, sense of belonging and community

4. Experience agency & efficacy: Build leadership capacity
Every difficulty in life presents us with an opportunity
To turn inward and invoke our own inner resources.

The trials we endure can and should introduce us to our strengths.

Epictetus
Dig deeply…

• You possess strengths you might not realize you have.
• Find the right one.
• Use it.
Your take home action steps:

- Use Strengths Language
- Affirm the Drive to Thrive
- Build the Environment

Get your AD to the NCAA Innovations website

http://www.ncaa.org/about/resources/research/changing-minds-changing-lives-winning-transition-college
Affirmation...
Appreciation...
Appraisal...